

August, 2015

Blue Mound State Park Weeping Rock Trail Monitoring

Dates: December 5, 2014 – April 10, 2015

A trail eco-counter model series 07070376/H4 was placed along the Pleasure Valley portion of the Weeping Rock Trail from December 5, 2014 through April 10, 2015. This counter monitors 24 hours a day with passive-infrared, pyroelectric technology and a high-precision lens. The counter was placed in this location to gather winter use visitation numbers (mainly hiking, snowshoeing, sledding, etc.) along this section of trail, with the intent to understand use patterns in this portion of the park. Snow cover observations were recorded from the Dodgeville, Wis. US station GHCND:USC00472173.

Upon retrieval of the trail counter in April, the department observed the counter had been broken into. The outer metal container it was housed in was pried open, although the counter and all the wiring were still present. Working with the manufacturer and experts, the data was successfully retrieved.

When reviewing the hourly records there are always a small percentage of counts that are abnormally high. These are typically from individuals waving their hands in front of the counter, animals grazing or heavy snowfall/rain. With these abnormal observations removed from the data set, a total of 1,697 observations were recorded over the winter session.

As shown in Figure 1 and Table 1. The highest counts were observed with little or no snowfall cover. This relationship may show that a park user will migrate towards a different recreational activity based upon snow cover. With 9.3 miles of groomed cross-country skiing trails, this becomes the primary recreational activity when these trails are open for skiing. With the lack of snow cover, hiking and off-road biking tend to become the primary recreational uses within the Pleasure Valley portion of the Weeping Rock Trail.

This recreation preference trend is core to a group called the Active Nature Watchers who enjoy viewing and photographing nature and are twice as likely to participate in these activities as the average person. The primary or core recreational activities with this group are viewing/photographing nature, day hiking, kayaking, learning/visiting a nature center, cross-country skiing, walking and swimming. About 16 percent of Wisconsinites 16 years and older (about 716,000 people) are characterized by this group.

Figure 1: Blue Mound State Park Weeping Rock Trail Visitor Counts and Snow Cover

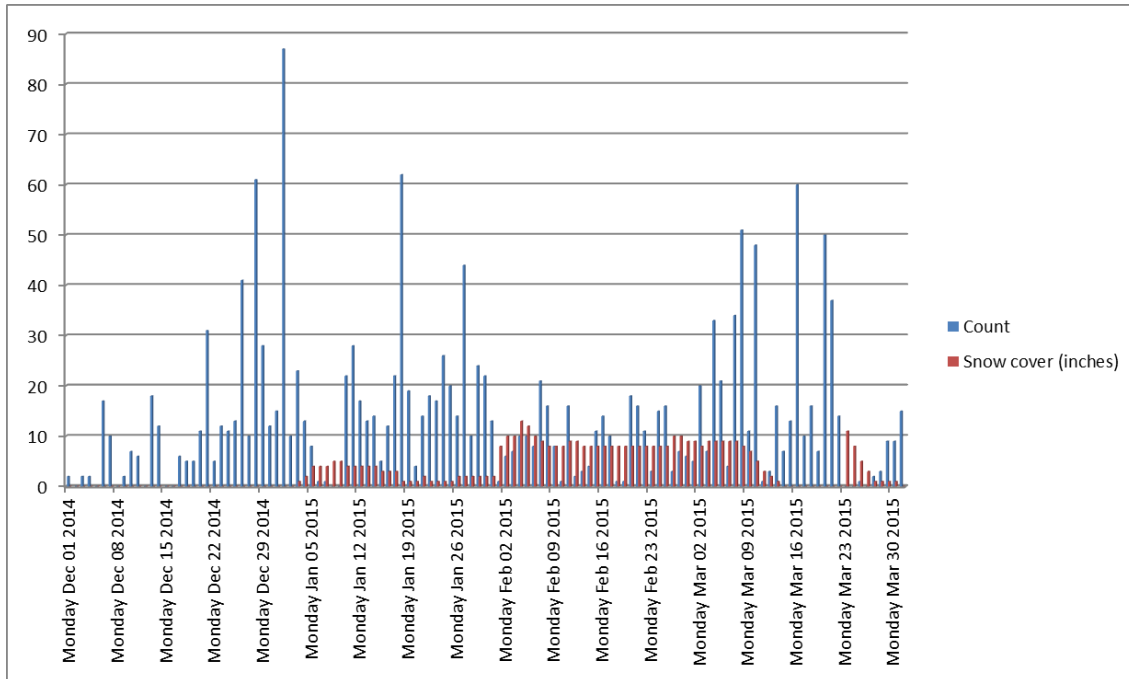


Table 1: Blue Mound State Park Weeping Rock Trail Visitor Counts and Snow Cover

Date	Count	Snow cover (inches)
Monday Dec 01 2014	2	0
Tuesday Dec 02 2014	0	0
Wednesday Dec 03 2014	2	0
Thursday Dec 04 2014	2	0
Friday Dec 05 2014	0	0
Saturday Dec 06 2014	17	0
Sunday Dec 07 2014	10	0
Monday Dec 08 2014	0	0
Tuesday Dec 09 2014	2	0
Wednesday Dec 10 2014	7	0
Thursday Dec 11 2014	6	0
Friday Dec 12 2014	0	0

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Saturday Dec 13 2014	18	0
Sunday Dec 14 2014	12	0
Monday Dec 15 2014	0	0
Tuesday Dec 16 2014	0	0
Wednesday Dec 17 2014	6	0
Thursday Dec 18 2014	5	0
Friday Dec 19 2014	5	0
Saturday Dec 20 2014	11	0
Sunday Dec 21 2014	31	0
Monday Dec 22 2014	5	0
Tuesday Dec 23 2014	12	0
Wednesday Dec 24 2014	11	0
Thursday Dec 25 2014	13	0
Friday Dec 26 2014	41	0
Saturday Dec 27 2014	10	0
Sunday Dec 28 2014	61	0
Monday Dec 29 2014	28	0
Tuesday Dec 30 2014	12	0
Wednesday Dec 31 2014	15	0
Thursday Jan 01 2015	87	0
Friday Jan 02 2015	10	0
Saturday Jan 03 2015	23	1
Sunday Jan 04 2015	13	2
Monday Jan 05 2015	8	4
Tuesday Jan 06 2015	1	4
Wednesday Jan 07 2015	1	4
Thursday Jan 08 2015	0	5
Friday Jan 09 2015	0	5
Saturday Jan 10 2015	22	4
Sunday Jan 11 2015	28	4
Monday Jan 12 2015	17	4
Tuesday Jan 13 2015	13	4
Wednesday Jan 14 2015	14	4
Thursday Jan 15 2015	5	3
Friday Jan 16 2015	12	3
Saturday Jan 17 2015	22	3
Sunday Jan 18 2015	62	1
Monday Jan 19 2015	19	1
Tuesday Jan 20 2015	4	1
Wednesday Jan 21 2015	14	2
Thursday Jan 22 2015	18	1
Friday Jan 23 2015	17	1
Saturday Jan 24 2015	26	1
Sunday Jan 25 2015	20	1
Monday Jan 26 2015	14	2
Tuesday Jan 27 2015	44	2
Wednesday Jan 28 2015	10	2

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Thursday Jan 29 2015	24	2
Friday Jan 30 2015	22	2
Saturday Jan 31 2015	13	2
Sunday Feb 01 2015	1	8
Monday Feb 02 2015	6	10
Tuesday Feb 03 2015	7	10
Wednesday Feb 04 2015	10	13
Thursday Feb 05 2015	10	12
Friday Feb 06 2015	8	10
Saturday Feb 07 2015	21	9
Sunday Feb 08 2015	16	8
Monday Feb 09 2015	8	8
Tuesday Feb 10 2015	1	8
Wednesday Feb 11 2015	16	9
Thursday Feb 12 2015	2	9
Friday Feb 13 2015	3	8
Saturday Feb 14 2015	4	8
Sunday Feb 15 2015	11	8
Monday Feb 16 2015	14	8
Tuesday Feb 17 2015	10	8
Wednesday Feb 18 2015	1	8
Thursday Feb 19 2015	1	8
Friday Feb 20 2015	18	8
Saturday Feb 21 2015	16	8
Sunday Feb 22 2015	11	8
Monday Feb 23 2015	3	8
Tuesday Feb 24 2015	15	8
Wednesday Feb 25 2015	16	8
Thursday Feb 26 2015	3	10
Friday Feb 27 2015	7	10
Saturday Feb 28 2015	6	9
Sunday Mar 01 2015	5	9
Monday Mar 02 2015	20	8
Tuesday Mar 03 2015	7	9
Wednesday Mar 04 2015	33	9
Thursday Mar 05 2015	21	9
Friday Mar 06 2015	4	9
Saturday Mar 07 2015	34	9
Sunday Mar 08 2015	51	8
Monday Mar 09 2015	11	7
Tuesday Mar 10 2015	48	5
Wednesday Mar 11 2015	1	3
Thursday Mar 12 2015	3	2
Friday Mar 13 2015	16	1
Saturday Mar 14 2015	7	0
Sunday Mar 15 2015	13	0
Monday Mar 16 2015	60	0

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Tuesday Mar 17 2015	10	0
Wednesday Mar 18 2015	16	0
Thursday Mar 19 2015	7	0
Friday Mar 20 2015	50	0
Saturday Mar 21 2015	37	0
Sunday Mar 22 2015	14	0
Monday Mar 23 2015	0	11
Tuesday Mar 24 2015	0	8
Wednesday Mar 25 2015	1	5
Thursday Mar 26 2015	0	3
Friday Mar 27 2015	2	1
Saturday Mar 28 2015	3	1
Sunday Mar 29 2015	9	1
Monday Mar 30 2015	9	1
Tuesday Mar 31 2015	15	0